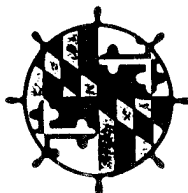


ASSOCIATION OF



MARYLAND PILOTS

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March 5, 2001

Lt. General Robert B. Flowers  
Commanding General and Chief of Engineers  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
441 G. Street, N.W.  
Room 3K05  
Washington, D.C. 20314-1000

Dear Lt. General Flowers:

I am the recently elected President of the Association of Maryland Pilots, filling the position vacated by Captain Michael Watson after he became President of the Washington-based American Pilot Association. I am writing to reiterate the support of the Association of Maryland Pilots for three proposed channel improvement projects in the Port of Baltimore. The channel improvement projects to which I refer are:

- Widening of the Brewerton Channel – Eastern Extension
- Straightening of the Tolchester S-Turn Channel
- Improvements to Channels and Anchorages in Baltimore Harbor

The Association of Maryland Pilots believes that each of these projects is critical to the safety and navigational efficiency of the Port, and we strongly endorse all three.

As the Pilots who guide ships into and out of the Port, we are experts on the Port's navigational channels, and the improvements necessary for their continued safe operation. Our specific views include the following:

- Widening of the Brewerton Channel – Eastern Extension – This is necessary to allow two ships to meet in this channel section. The Eastern Extension runs perpendicular to the Bay's currents and prevailing winds. The channel's orientation to these forces prohibits all but the smallest ships from meeting there at its present 450' width. Once the channel is widened to the approved 600' width, even two Panamax ships will be able to meet under reasonable current and wind conditions.

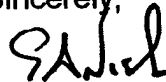
- Straightening of Tolchester S-Turn – This winding section of the channel needs to be straightened to ensure navigational safety. The present “S” curve configuration requires a ship to change course 5 times within three miles. This channel does not meet the Corps of Engineers’ own standard for the minimum distance between turns.
- Improvements to Baltimore Harbor Channels and Anchorages – Baltimore needs anchorages, channels and turning basins that can accommodate the vessels that call at the port. In recent decades the size and draft of ships has increased dramatically. The terminals in Baltimore have been able to keep pace with this growth, but the harbor’s waterways (especially the anchorages) have lagged behind. We now have the unsatisfactory condition wherein large ships arriving in the harbor have no place to go if some situation prevents their immediate berthing. Harbor anchorages, along with the associated access channels and turning basin, must be improved to ensure safe operations and keep Baltimore competitive as a world-class port.

I realize that you are likely aware of the above information but I wanted to reiterate these facts to emphasize the critical need for these projects.

I ask for your full support to ensure that these three projects are implemented in the Port of Baltimore as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Captain Eric A. Nielsen  
President

Cc: Colonel Charles J. Fiala, Jr.  
Mr. James J. White, Executive Director, Maryland Port Administration